

Amendments to the Claims

Listing of Claims:

Original claims 1-20 (canceled).

Amended claims 1-18 (canceled).

Claim 21 (new): A keyboard, comprising:

at least one key, said at least one key having:

a plurality of superposed filters each corresponding to a value of a physical characteristic of the light and to a message to be displayed on said at least one key; and

a contactor adapted to supply a signal representative of an interaction between a user and said key;

a light source adapted to light up, by backlighting, the superposed filters of said at least one key;

a modulator for modulating at least one physical characteristic of said light source, adapted to modulate at least one value of the physical characteristic of the light emitted by said light source, to make visible a message placed on said filter of said at least one key; and

a reception device receiving signals from said contactor, said reception device being adapted to assign different symbols to said signals, in line with a switching carried out by a switching means.

Claim 22 (new): The keyboard according to claim 21, wherein each filter is made up of a transparent or translucent medium having the message printed thereon.

Claim 23 (new): The keyboard according to claim 21, wherein said light source is adapted to light up jointly, by backlighting, a plurality of keys and the superposed filters thereof, and wherein said modulator of at least one physical characteristic of said light source is adapted to modulate at least one value of the physical characteristic of the light emitted by the light source and received by a plurality of keys, in order to jointly make visible the messages placed on a said filter of each said key.

Claim 24 (new): The keyboard according to claim 21, wherein each filter has transparent areas and areas with absorption spectra respectively corresponding substantially to emission spectra of said light source, for different modulation values of the modulator.

Claim 25 (new): The keyboard according to claim 21, wherein each said key comprises at least three superposed filters, said filters having transparent areas and areas with absorption spectra respectively corresponding substantially to emission spectra of said light source, for at least three modulation values of said modulator.

Claim 26 (new): The keyboard according to claim 21, wherein said modulator is

adapted to modify a spectral band of light reaching said filters and said filters provide spectral bands of different transparency.

Claim 27 (new): The keyboard according to claim 21, wherein said light source (630) comprises a light-emitting diode having a spectral band of emission that varies according to an electrical characteristics of a power signal applied thereto, and said modulator is adapted to modify said electrical characteristics.

Claim 28 (new): The keyboard according to claim 21, wherein said light source comprises at least two independent electro-optical transducers placed in parallel on an optical path of light rays from said light source to said key, and said modulator is adapted to control alternately the light emission by either one of said electro-optical transducers.

Claim 29 (new): The keyboard according to claim 21, wherein said modulator is adapted to modify a principal axis of polarization of light rays reaching said filters, and said filters have mutually different transparencies according to an axis of polarization.

Claim 30 (new): The keyboard according to claim 21, wherein said filters comprise components adapted to produce constructive or destructive interferences depending on an angle of incidence of the light rays and said modulator is adapted to modify the angle of incidence of the light rays emitted by said light source.

Claim 31 (new): The keyboard according to claim 21, wherein said filters comprise holograms and said light source comprises at least two electro-optical transducers adapted to light up said holograms with different angles of incidence in order to make different symbols or messages appear on said key, and wherein said modulator is adapted to modify the angle of incidence of the light rays emitted by said light source.

Claim 32 (new): The keyboard according to claim 21, wherein said filters comprise components adapted to produce total or partial reflections depending on an angle of incidence of the light rays and said light source comprises at least two electro-optical transducers adapted to light up said filters with different angles of incidence in order to make different symbols or messages appear on the key, and wherein said modulator is adapted to modify the angle of incidence of the light rays emitted by said light source.

Claim 33 (new): The keyboard according to claim 21, wherein said filters comprise components adapted to realize different light transfers depending on an angle of incidence of the light rays and said light source comprises at least two electro-optical transducers adapted to light up said filters with different angles of incidence in order to make different symbols or messages appear on the key, and wherein said modulator is adapted to modify the angle of incidence of the light rays emitted by said light source.

Claim 34 (new): The keyboard according to claim 21, which comprises at least one optical fiber defining an optical path from said light source to said key.

Claim 35 (new): The keyboard according to claim 21, which comprises at least one optical reflector element defining an optical path from said light source to said key.

Claim 36 (new): The keyboard according to claim 21, wherein at least two of said filters of at least one key are each formed of an assembly of filters, with the assemblies of filters being juxtaposed alternately in the key.

Claim 37 (new): In combination with an electronic device selected from the group consisting of:

a personal digital assistant, an organizer, a telephone, a games console, a portable computer, an Internet access terminal, an Automatic Teller Machine, a watch, a remote control, a portable music player, a positioning system and an audiovisual signal receiver, office or leisure electronic equipment, a facsimile machine, a photocopier, a scanner, a recorded media reader, a home system installation, a household appliance, a medical device, a measurement device, an automated analysis device, automobile equipment, a signboard, a switch, a games system, a decorative element, a lamp, and/or a display panel;

a key according to claim 21 integrated with the electronic device.

Claim 38 (new): A display method, which comprises the following method steps:

switching a light source adapted to light up, by backlighting, at least one key, each key including:

at least two superposed filters, each filter corresponding to a value of a physical characteristic of the light and to a message to be displayed on the key; and

a contactor adapted to deliver a signal representative of an interaction between a user and the key;

modulating at least one value of the physical characteristic of the light emitted by the light source, in order to jointly make visible a message placed on a filter of each key; and

receiving signals coming from each of the contactors, during which different symbols are assigned to the signals, depending on a state of a switching means performing the switching.